

amnesia poetica



Colette Lee Höser

all poems and drawings by Colette Lee Höser
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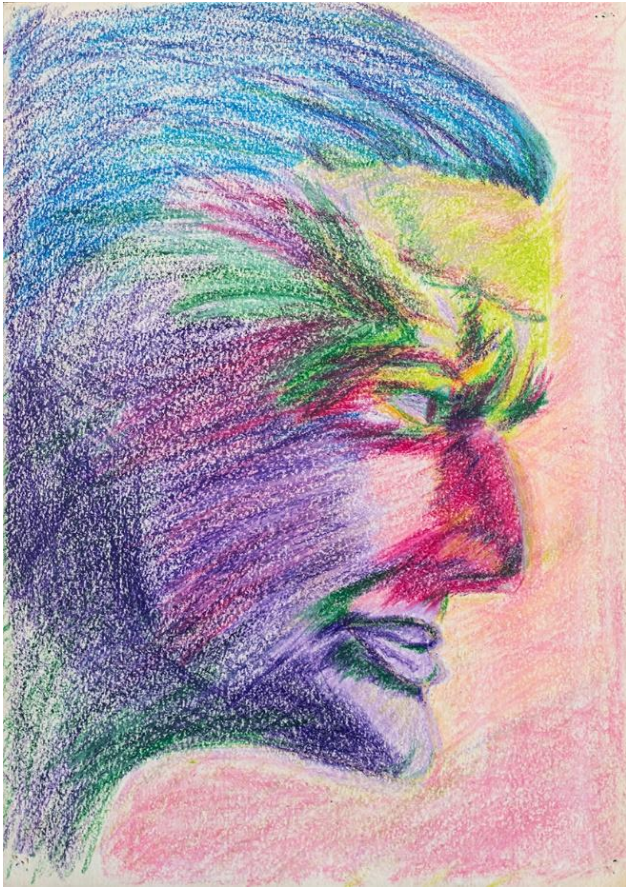
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poetry



to poets

no poem of sympathy
to you need I write

blue as a cloudless sky
may you be
or wild and uncontrolled
as a stormy sea

no matter to me
what counts, is heart
how deep
how pure
how strong it be

as large as eternity
as deep as timelessness
as pure as non-thought
as strong as feelings

amongst the immortals
then you stand
never to die
in spirals forever to fly

landscape a poem

moments of silence
time to find peace

meditate on nothingness
or on everything

you are one alone
fear is at once motor
and brakes

coming then to a border

self-pity is overweight luggage
and must be left behind

but the journey is unknown

fearful, there can be no luggage
to be nothingness

a heart beating in tune

de la poésie

le poète tient un potager
et la parole est censée le nourrir
pourtant, même bien préparé
le vers purifié du poète
paraissant sûr
me met en garde

la parole mûrie
hors d'aspirant
hors d'adhérent
sonne dur, et trop vite
la parole alléchante apparaît
au mauvais moment
et à mesure que la force décline
celle du dedans
qui nous ordonne de nous taire

ainsi, il apparaît
que la parole se maîtrise plutôt
par celui qui s'en passe
car au lieu d'une telle mise
celui-là préfère agir
ailleurs

to Breyten Breytenbach

I am the stranger
who listened to
the sure clear voice
I am the child
who followed the
perfect trace
the luminous space
I am the sister
who howled in a
black moonless night
for her companions
I have a brother
who is blessed with sight
I am the centre
who felt your truth
revealed and clarified
who turned me into
everything
lost
forgotten
suppressed
obscured
everything
renounced - for so long
I am the boundless joy
In the present I invent

to Gustav Mahler

I listen to you with mind intent
to find what mysteries
in those wistful sounds you sent
of times distressed
of anguish
and all this human world's
frail lament

what Kubla Khan
gave you assent
where was this paradise
and place content?

dear friend
so joyous has time with you
been spent
that I conclude
love was always present

to warriors

accept your fate warriors
you were meant to be
knowledge of life
your aim, be it pleasure or pain
always to question
yet continue just the same

love once, and you will see
separate and alone the solitary bird
seeks no company
his quest is to be truth's eternity

humanity, with sentiment imbued
issued Eros, and passion ensued
spirits into murky waters tread
where ere their lusting hearts them led

warriors, fight to abjure the anguish
of this mystic flight
and find the joy
in the wholeness of life's ploy

to death

death
tonight, we shall comply
hold court
as two respectful friends
to admonish the lie
fear we shall banish
as father to hate
love will be our guide
and we
side by side
transposing light to light
will reach the treasures
of love's plight



life



men and women

men think
but women are
in love
there is this gap
in whom we think we are

men have distance
eye in the sky
for her
that's not nearly too far
for stars that fly around
his head and heart

when the thrust
is eye to eye
mouth to tender lips
skin silk, softly
and shoulders
then breast, to the thunder of hearts
beating as one torso
hip delicate hollow
to sex, eager trembling, deep within

nothing but two
beating as one
no more pretending
that joy doesn't exist

« que fais-tu ? »

voilà, l'autre soir
tu m'interroges « que fais-tu ? »
faut-il croire, sincère intérêt à savoir
ou maligne question passe-temps notoire ?
si le ton est vrai
je t'invite à lire d'un trait
tout et en partie
de ce que je fais

la question est posée
donc, voici ma réponse
arrosée d'une douce amitié

d'abord, par bouffées tranquilles
je respire
c'est le coup de joie
ou d'inquiétude
qui sans préavis apparaît et s'installe
et met le cœur en cavale
puis, je lis, assise, couchée, et en repli
en prenant mes distances au monde
pour mieux le saisir
j'écris aussi, comme à toi je fis mon récit ici

la suite la voici :
souvent je ris

les vents

rappelle-toi
je suis femme
et que je ressemble
à tous les vents
à celui-ci
qui apporte la pluie
et aussi
à celui-là
qui emporte les nuages
le souffle, chaud et doux
mais aussi
à celui-ci
qui frissonne et détruit
et à tout instant
soufflent les vents

ripe thoughts

caught
mingled
singled out

shout
see sprout
mangled

red words
tangled in vines
blame times
chimes

time passes
losses evaporate
ask me to cooperate

once questioned

onwards, onwards did she go
never knowing when to stop

a fear of being
once made her wonder
where it led

once questioned
never will she ask again
until they find her dead

the clock

tick...tock ...tick... tick... tick...
listen to the clock
flick... shock... thick... flock...
pack... whack... sacked...
listen to the machine
the lie
reality
tick... tick... tick away
man's doom
forgot
in the boom
as the machine continues
to tick and to tock
to block and to mock
the silent scream
of a skeletal frame
a child of Biafra, Vietnam, Africa, South America...
a flicker on the screen... half a tick... forgot
as the machine continues
tick... tock... tick...
no veins to bleed
no belly to feed
no soul to need
all that is left in the still
is the click of a switch
tick tock tick

courage

have I the courage
to live from day to day
knowing one battles all along the way?

being complete
ground to feet
ready to melt in the cosmic belt

always to be
as it is, to see
one in love
with the heart of man

springs deliverance

a sun full day
with a little work, as well as play
and time to spend from the fray
butterflies dancing
grasshoppers prancing
flowers abundant
gloom is redundant
children are hopping
on the sandy village square
old men are sopping
in a cafe bright
with eyes alight
a bird is flirting
a dog is swimming in the village fountain
a fly is daringly curious
a bee is watching and studious
a melee of joyful action
anticipating
autumn's sanctions

the stillness of dawn

the stillness of dawn
when a blue, white glow
dusts the landscape
and blends sea with sky

now as the horizons melt
and all is one whole
like the eternal movement of the seas
and the endless sky and the spinning earth

mystery reveals herself
past and future cease to count
now is the frozen fount
from which to leap and then to fly

family



pour ma fille

prends ma main et serre-la fort
laisse-moi entendre l'écho de ton cœur
et tu me rendra forte
parce qu'avant toi, je ne savais rien

je laisse le gâchis à d'autres
par amour de toi, mon enfant
je serai sage, je serai douce

j'oublierai la peur
je n'aurai plus de mémoire
j'aurai envie de découvrir
notre premier matin ensemble

ce sera mon premier jour
et tu seras là
petite douceur inespérée
avec tes cris et tes rires

et tes moues boudeuses
m'ouvrira la porte
d'un demain heureux
de la tendresse
et nous nous laisserons prendre
au gout de l'enfance
mon cœur, je n'ai qu'une
esquisse de paradis à t'offrir
mais j'ouvre grands mes bras
à l'avenir qui se profile
et ce qu'il nous apportera

advice for the road

after this storm within has calmed
you will see the world is still as when you left it
the pain you feel now cannot be avoided
but it can be shared and overcome

if you feel compassion towards others
and you see your own faults clearly
it will give you the strength to change

life is not desire for self-satisfaction
you should desire seeing life as it is
the pain that is shared by our humanity
the individuals who struggle
to comprehend their part in in this movement

we grow when we learn and change
yet we all find something to work on
to survive, we need ...so little

what will you take as baggage?
the pearls of wisdom
that you heard, read, or recognized
and compassion for others
it will light dark passages
or will you take sombre, dank directions
that you're hardly ready to undertake?

remember me then, wingless angel
my black fathomless pearl
once masks evaporate
life be all or nothing

care with a passion
give all and let only the end guide you
while the finest of lines will open to you

mourning

the cicadas are scratching
only mating can stop them now
clouds gather from the West
cooling late morning
perfect...in fact

not fiction
he died one month and a day ago

it was the end of spring
the blossoms were out
the house and garden looked so
paradisiac
romantic
a jewel embedded in the lap of a forest

time passes and still find no answers
why did he kill himself I ask myself again
and again

different answers
none that finds a sense of truth quite whole
or acceptable

the tree of life

there is in our garden
a carob tree
my mirror of a summer
a day, a moment ago
the sun comes slow of a morning
and then only flooding the crowns
of vertical branches
on a still dark morning

the knowledge of
a blue cloudless sky
reflecting you as you are
I belong
I have learnt, while reflecting on clouds
into which band or wave I belong
that to which some people call
the scum of the earth

la main ouverte

donne
donne-moi ta main
que je la mette sur mon cœur
sens-tu
sa douleur
sa joie ?
sais-tu
qu'il n'a pas peur
du futur ?
il danse sur le toit du monde
il dépasse même
son propre état
il vole
et dans son voyage
il se donne entièrement
aux paysages

à ma mère

c'est le soleil qui a chauffé mon existence
qui m'a sauvé du noir que je voyais, perdue
dans tes yeux bleus
bleus comme le ciel qui t'appartenait

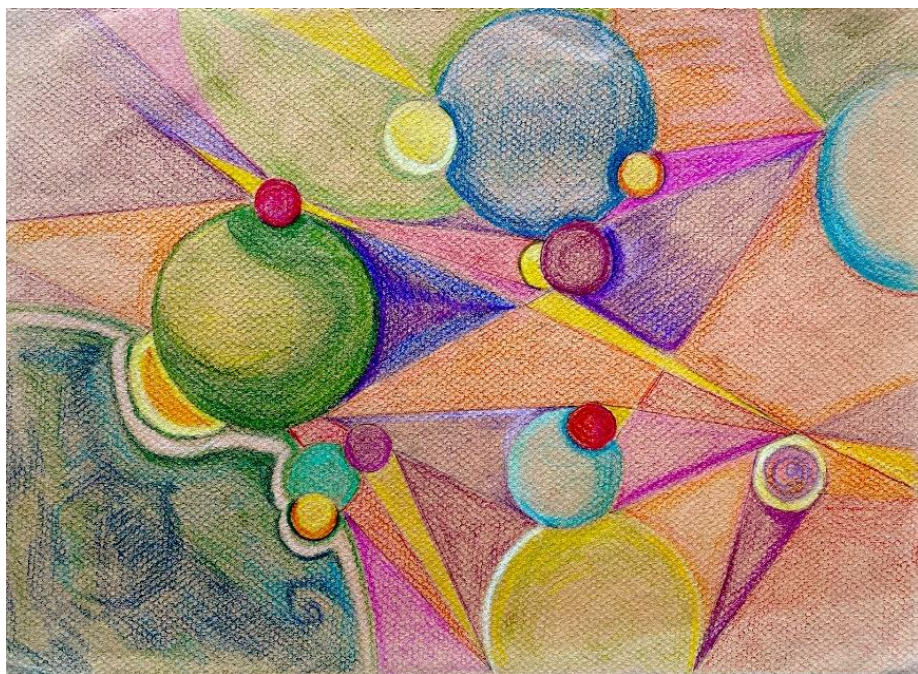
tu ne t'en souvenais plus que
parfois assise dans une église
tu ne sentais plus ni joie ni tristesse
ni ambition ni amertume
sans pensée aucune
la peur oubliée
si fragile ces instants infinis
comme le bleu ciel et toute la nature

puis tu les a niés et tu les as perdus
oubliés à jamais
la fin de ta poursuite folle de la peur
à toi le choix de la plus complète solitude
le cauchemar qui t'a obsédée
quel donc était cet enfer de ta création
ta souffrance, ta haine

femme antique, femme folle
qui n'a jamais vu la grandeur humaine
de la tragédie de sa vie
ni les vagues des ténèbres
qu'elle a engendrées



thoughts



screen addiction

square sets
glare
square eyes
stare
square sounds
blare
blinking
sinking
thinking for you
amusing
excusing
abusing of you
today' s square
noted
yesterday 's
misquoted
tomorrow
always
tomorrow
the bright square
gloated

London

square buildings
round towers
skylines piercing
trains crushing
cars choking
thinking of London

Knightsbridge where diamonds blink and wink
Paddington where children play and garbage stink
bright lights
Piccadilly Circus
attract to distract
light to blind
the poor rich exciting dazzling city
under Eros lit at night
by the glow of a neon light
a drugged bewildered youth
silently sits
testimony of the city's truth

stop! just thinking

when you stop to think
that you rise or sink
continuity to be had
like fashion or fad
it makes you glad
when you find the link
and you stop to think
that you rise or sink

to the wandering Jew

you who saw the greatest die
for nought, they said
for two thousand years you searched in vain

you saw the inquisition
and all those wars with a religious aim
you saw them die in Mary's name
at the Saint Bartholomew

you saw them perish from the pest and cholera
and you saw the good king die
because he liked to tinker
they put his head to the cleaver

you who saw them gassed
massacred for naught, sacrificed
yours, burning in the crematorium

you who roamed every ocean
where for naught the valiant dolphins die
you saw the seas dry-up
and the air turn stale

you who will see history written
that man had gone Babylonian
they wanted to go beyond their universe
and forgot all about their good, sweet earth

oh you, the wandering Jew
will live on forever
what will we tell our children
when all is lost and gone

what kind of a person

what kind of a person are you
I hear them say

I'm a person with a complex plumbing of the soul
with sophisticated instruments
of feeling
and a system of controlled memory
at the end of the twentieth century

but with an old body
from ancient times
and with a God even older than my body
I'm a person made for the surface of the earth

low places, caves and wells frighten me
mountain peaks and tall buildings scare me
I'm not like an inserted fork
not a cutting knife
not a stuck spoon

I'm not flat and sly
like a spatula creeping up from below
at most I am a heavy and clumsy pestle
mashing good and bad together
for a little taste
and a little fragrance

arrows do not direct me
I conduct my business carefully
and quietly
like a long will
that began to be written
the moment I was born

now I stand at the side of the street
weary, leaning on a parking meter
I can stand here for nothing
it's free
I'm not a car, I'm a person
a woman-God
a goddammed woman
whose days are numbered
hallelujah

noir

cette pierre, dure, lisse, noire,
qui brille aux lumières du soleil,
quand l'eau la couvre
et la transforme en miroir noire

cette pierre, luisant de toutes les couleurs
n'a pas de réelle profondeur
mais réfléchit l'infini de la nuit
du non-temps

nous sommes déjà dedans
l'instant de cette pierre brillante
dans une clarté aveuglante
l'infini fracas du noir silent
là, où tout et rien existe

severed

when the umbilical cord is severed
the spirit unleashed
into space is projected
the alien place inspected
suspected
and finally
the empirical chase
of the human race
for the transient state of grace
rejected

la vérité

et la vérité tomba bas,
comme des gouttelettes d'eau sombre
qui s'éclatent à la lumière

ce qui s'éclate se transpose
c'est la bulle qui s'expose, s'explose
et dans l'éternité repose

secrets

little by little
all was abandoned
no ties
to superficiality
someone else's reality
free and light
the mountains are waiting
for the paths
we're creating
to the issueless dome
with its crown of chrome
already begun
before this beginning
one stone is left unturned
that each holds sacred
when the hidden at last is shown
we will receive
a cup to hold the balm
a tie to sooth and calm
create
gathered within
the charm, our future

justice

was the mountain made to climb
the river to cross from shore to shore
the sky to see the limitless time
the sun to kindle the power of life
the moon to illuminate its mysterious core
the sea to reflect the struggle and calm
and man, to conjure a riddle to rhyme?

for my sisters

have we really met in silent contemplation
sit close together on the loving mountain
then danced on the celestial blue fields
on a moonlit ocean

ancient motions
describing in graceful flow
our separateness
our oneness

have we yet offered our hand
in gentle complicity
when we see far into the starless night
when our sisters at the same moment cannot

I write these words to remember
as sometimes we forget
we are here to help each other
to reach the summit of our force

steps

to climb
 winding
 wondering
 wanted flights
 treading
 warily
 lest you find
instead of a spiral
 a circle
 step
 light and soft
 never to skip
 one
 but
 hardly to tread
 some
 unspecific time
 gives unlimited time
so climb on
unwearied
and take a breath
 in pleasure
 when you can

waiting

the weight
waying the way
like the moans waning
like the pit-pat raining
like the shadow gaining
waiting
while the dew forms
while the battle storms
while changing the norms
waiting
for the hatch to fall
for fools to stall
for the love of all
waiting
with time with crime
with rhyme
waiting
stating
relating
creating

the rule

to truth they made their pledge
around their souls
an imperious hedge
for none to pierce
these warriors so fierce
to those so wise
human frailties
not even to despise

so it is with the just
to neither
chastise nor sympathize
with another souls despairing cries
with visions of light
to mortals
unseen past them stride

to those who make the choice
and in whose actions their silence is voiced
their flesh retains
though all in vain
their tempted hearts
to the end remain

meandering

smoking days
the woman's crazed
wondering at Bach
questioning the fuck
learning what's luck
will
will the will
will me to success
saintliness
or saneness
power
and the man
that beckons me from his tower
love too must have its say
a solitary role it seems to play
past the past
with memories mask
unheeded future unneeded
though today we seed it
today we start anew
in actions that are true
too true
when you think of the rent that s due
and all the other social problems too

right and wrong

what is right
what is wrong
now
that is the only song
fight
and you might win
acceptance is the only sin
spiral is the dream
circles
never ending circles
the reality which we spin

intent

at that moment
all was given
all is seen
the shadows that past
losses and gains
the truth of aims

little was said
speaking metaphors
a means of exchange
interpret
rearrange
in the light of the way

feelings



fear of fantasy

listen
and be kind
for I write
haphazard words
that come to my mind

I can no longer fight
there is too much to find
like this beautiful world
that blows my mind
all's a little hazy
and I feel sanely crazy
like falling off a mountain
like bubbles in a fountain

summer is here
my man is near
the pungent smell of flowers in bloom
obliterating all thoughts
of future doom
what strange deranged multicolour forms flow
can you see the brilliance of love's glow?

I fear I shall suddenly awaken from this wondrous dream...
and SCREAM

drifting

locked in faces
uninhabited places
time to go
but moving slow
we climb and blow away our tiny minds

so, we know we're gone
and are still going on
knowing we keep going
while here we stay
in a metaphysical way

while the record plays
the music stays
and carries us along its waves
into timeless space
invisibly tracing

forever it remains
not-being but feeling
notes float, soar and whirl
and we, movement and space
clarity and turmoil

fear

what cowards are we
that we fear to look
at the distant star
to lose all human feelings
in the all-sealing space
light and airy
swept by the windy chase
into the unknown passages
of eternity's face

it all adds up to something
if at that moment
you are there
complete
and striped of all form
and all of you perceives
as much as you are able then
no matter past or future
the present will stand
moments will follow
flooding the sand
seeing
being
the point in a spiral
eternally spinning

letting go

after having let go
and going
into the unknown
watching all around you
you might find yourself wondering at your
wanderings
taking you into the unknown
into the nowhere
to the no-where of the no-place
of no thingness
the nothingness
that is your everything
and the meaninglessness
that is
deathlessness

rain

it's been raining so long now
body awake, thoughts soaked
into the watery space
the dome's pure shimmering light
and the greens replenish power
to evoke
petals pink and white
glow and explode
to the child the sun appears when hidden
one with the earth flowing with life

it's still raining, a continuous gentle drizzle
pockmarks on the pool
reflections of trees and of stone
the cat snuggles at my side
the view and comfort of the chaise-longue
a front row seat, as day dissolves into night
a block of uniform grey presses down
and as I end this reflection
the rain has stopped
silence
with a twitter and chirp
punctuating in spaces
relating in thoughts and rhythm
to the myth of time

new year

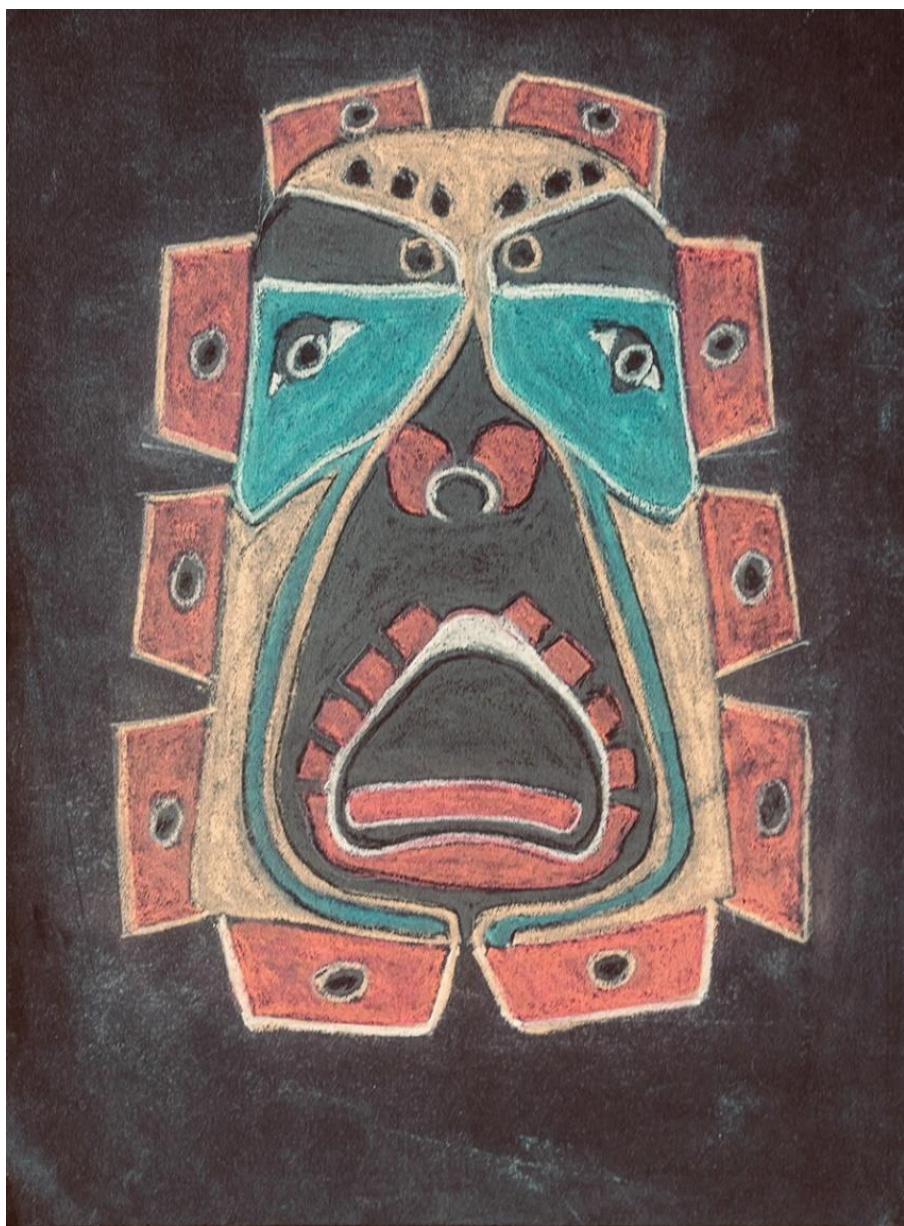
eager the doe's eye
and zoom the butterfly
watch out nature's cry
scream, laugh, wiggle about
sit tight or blot you out
stone men are walking about
natural as flying trout
passing shadows in black holes of sound
freedoms found
here, where the mountains are climbing
to the light of the moon's sound

hope

a mass of tears has transformed to stones now
sharpened on suffering
and woven into slings
hope lies in the rubble of this rich fortress
taking today what tomorrow never brings

madness

she's mad they said
might as well be dead, they said
they caught her looking at the sun
and for her sin, at dawn
execution is to be carried out
...by the gun
yet to her all was a dream
except the rhythmic beat
of the external stream
the white snow
with its cold blue glow
and the sheer light heat
of the burning sun
man-made guns to destroy
and her madness was still to feel joy



fear

was at the beginning
in the child that sees the sinning
clarity
then it battled to find
and just in time discovered
the games of the mind

this led it to the knowledge of power
and the spiral of life
forever in flower

more than ever

more than ever
I need to see
the clear blue sky
into where I fly
more than ever
I need to flee
the painted forms
abyss of the norms
more than ever
I need to be
inside love
outside and within me

the veil is lifted

I see with open eye,
all the things I long to be
. . . . all the things I am
daring and free
striped of all fancy
belonging to everything
and nothing at all
no carrier of gloom
will shadow my windows
no narrow chains
will shorten my sight
in the meantime
I leave you
back to the fire flight
and see if I survive you

dreaming

ah, what respite, to have nothing to say
to be nothing more than what you are
about to be life
amongst the millions of ideas
other thoughts or others think about
contemplate stars, bright, unique
existing without life

would man lose his life
where he to be like the stars?

the spirit unleashed

when there is no source
from which to spring
the spirit unleashed
is detached, freed
alone as the wind becomes
its vehicle to taste
many different streams
the source designed
from creeks to raging rivers
waterfalls, whirlpools
undercurrents, twisters
integrating
feeling bigotry, injustice
is a shrewdness
clutching, greedy
little hands
ashes
of a long ago past

solitude

ce soir
j'ai cherche les gens
je les ai tellement cherchés
je voulais
qu'ils m' envahissent
avec leur paroles
avec leurs mots
je voulais me noyer
dans la légèreté
mais
c'est moi qui ai parle
c'est moi qui les ai noyés
dans le brouillard de mes mots
j'ai bu, avec grand soif
et la fumée et moi
nous sommes désintégrées
sans séparation
mes pensées ont couru
la course de l'espace
plus vite même que le temps
et voilà
je me trouve seule
seule dans l'abîme
emportée par la rivière de mes mots
qui tombent
qui tombent
à tout jamais dans le vide

femme de feuille

femme de feuille

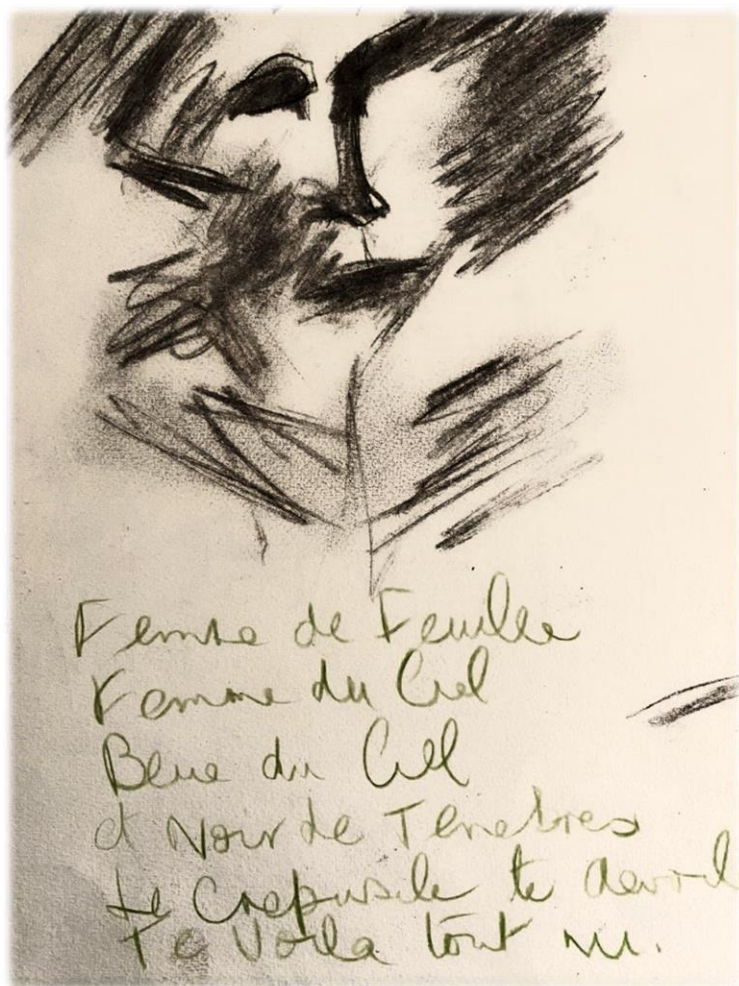
femme du ciel

bleu du ciel

et noir des ténèbres

le crépuscule te dévoilera

te voilà toute nue



enchantment

for that humble world
that man has named nature
for all the young and tender leaves
that soften the view of the eye
noticed or unnoticed
they kiss many a passer by
for the long and slender pines
for the dark and twirled vines
for the radiant blossoms
and their sun-ripe fruit
fulfilled
giving
the mountains wait in silence
revealing
at a distance
their humble awesome price
the deer and her companions
wide eyed
ready
eager
breathless
as they rise
the eagle flies
a soaring solitary pose
and binds in harmony
earth and sky
as eternity froze

a verdade

o que está certo, o que está errado.
agora é a única música

luta e você pode ganhar
a aceitação é o único pecado

a espiral é o sonho
círculos que nunca terminam círculos
a realidade em que giramos

to be bold

stars scroll bright
in the night
the light
expands and drones
in the black unknown
to dream
and hold out to the limitless
silence of the heart
without fear or restrain
in one word, to be bold

a revelation.

once
when I went walking and happened to stop
my internal, infernal talking
a sudden revelation
of my present destination
became a physical sensation
of my spiritual creation

the scream

it is not as you might have imagined
neither lost nor terrified
petrified by the last breath of life

could it not be the sublime
last, conscious connection to life
the immense journey
finally accomplished

pain is real and necessary
then, beyond it dissolves into space
to become no-time

love



why love

there are those that cannot feel
what to others
is a spell to seal
all reality

a spark within the darkness
a knowing without flaw
of being
though into death
must fall
with cause
or without

to reason others set about
to put the world
in order
to leave
its feelings out
to pride they pledge their cause
and make their mark
with rules and more

last words

run
run away before loves light blinds you
and you feel, just once
that which the eye cannot behold

run
and be with your oblivious components
who will hear you weep
and suffer not

who will hear you laugh
and not partake of the joy
in your heart

I too
will be thrown
into the burning jowls of life, alone

they shall not hear me weep
too numb to think
even my laughter within me
is asleep

the beginning

we walked in the mountains
hand in hand
you let the way to a secret place
there in the wind
looking south
we exchange silent vows
this is the source
the beginning we invented
and side-by-side
we returned to the present
with one light heart to guide

déni

ni avec plaisir, ni sans plaisir
ni avec pitié, ni sans pitié
ni avec tendresse, ni sans tendresse
et puis
nie l'amour
nie tout
mais prends-moi dans les bras
et nie mon existence

together sometime

our hearts unlocked
so slowly intertwine
beyond all reach
oblivious of time

although I bear
the weight of your body
never was taste or smell
more sweet
than the passions
that love with secret
so boldly surrendered
moment so splendid
time has ended

I know, roughly awakened
by the distant crow
that one caress
will cajole me into the rest

entering once more
the cobbled path outside my door
to people and places
a world without faces

partage

j'ai besoin de ta présence
j'ai besoin aussi de ta vraie
connaissance, au plus profond
non pour comprendre, mais pour partager

my love

listen to the silent waves of tenderness
that enfold you
into the mystical sparkling glow
that you have made
of my heart



eternal love

you shall love
my shiny nose
my stretch marks
my black spots
my texts
my farts
my greasy hair
and all my manias
and my cats
ameras all this forever
or not amaras me

if transience bestows value
what is eternal love?
if you can love and not trust
can you trust your love?
love can't be found in words
love can't be found in thoughts
but if you come into my arms and
look into my eyes, then
for a transient moment
you can feel eternity

there is magic in the world

all my senses live and see
once again, since when
I dreamt that life
and my love
are one

time goes by so quickly

so, we take each moment together
as precious as the last
when we meet in our beds
looking into those steady kind eyes
the warmth of your soft, silky skin
every cell of your body
blending into mine

taking leave

I must bid my farewell now
take my leave of you

time to say no more
but that it aches to say "A Dieu"

now return to other things
with their pain and pleasure

love be still
you had your feast
your heart has had its fill

for there in the moonlight
of a dream
love we found
and are still

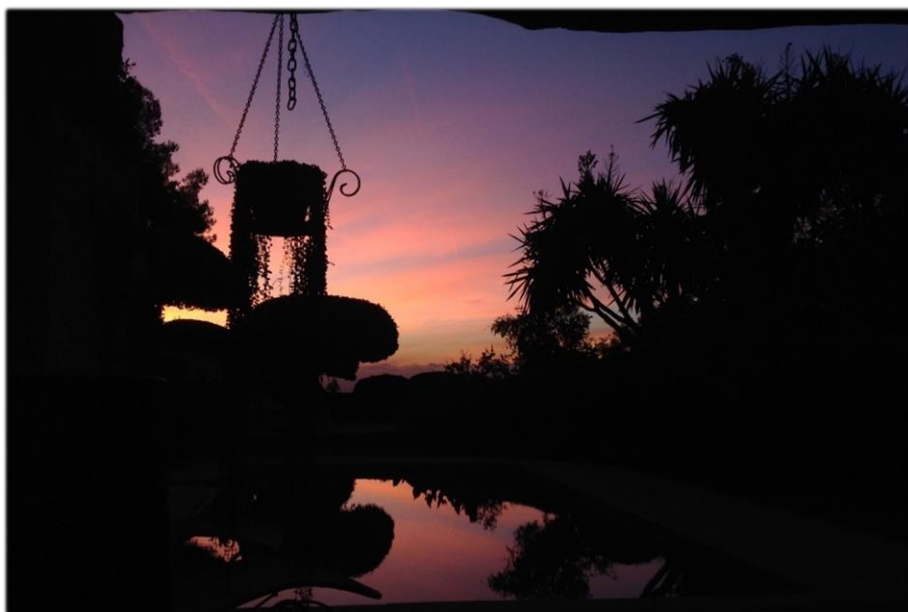
the last hour

it's the last hour
of the last day

so go, go where
you're light

amongst the stars
in the silver dome
you'll find me
waiting...

waiting for you to
recount the journey



translations



de la poésie (about poetry)

the poet keeps a garden
and words are supposed to feed him
yet, however well prepared
the poet's purified verse
appearing safe
makes me cautious

the matured word
without aspirations
without adherences
sounds hard, and too quickly
the tempting word appears
at the wrong time
and as the force declines
the one from within
which orders us to be silent

thus, it appears
that speech is best mastered
by the one who does without it
for instead of such a setting
he prefers to act
elsewhere

les vents (the winds)

remember
I am a woman
I am all types of wind together
like the one
that brings the rain
and also like the one
that carries away the clouds
the breeze, warm and soft
but also like the one
that shudders and destroys
and at every moment
the wind blows

déni (denial)

neither with pleasure nor without pleasure
neither with pity, nor without pity
nor with tenderness, nor without tenderness
and then
deny love
deny everything
but take me in your arms
and deny my existence

black

this stone, hard, smooth, black
that shines in the sunlight
when the water covers it
and transforms it into a black mirror

this stone, shining with all the colors
has no real depth
but reflects the infinity of the night
of non-time

we are already inside
the moment of this shining stone
in a blinding clarity
the infinite crash of the silent black
there, where everything and nothing exists

partage (sharing)

I need your presence
I need your true
knowledge, deep down
not to understand, but to share
a hidden treasure

« que fais tu ? » ("what are you doing?")

see, the other night
you ask me "what are you doing"?
are we to believe it's sincere interest in knowing
or a malignant hobby to question?
if the intention is true
I invite you to read it in one go
all and part
of what I do

the question was asked
so, here is my answer
sprinkled with sweet friendship

at first in quiet puffs
I breathe
it's a burst of joy
or a worry
that without warning appears and settles
and puts my heart on the run
I read, sitting, lying, and folding myself
taking my distance from the world
to better grasp it
I also write, as I told you my story here

And here is the rest:
often I laugh

pour ma fille (for my daughter)

take my hand and hold it tight
let me hear the echo of your heart
and you will make me strong
because before you I knew nothing

I leave the mess to others
for your sake, my child
I will be wise, I will be gentle

I will forget fear
I will have no memory
I will want to discover
our first morning together

it will be my first day
and you will be there
a little unexpected sweetness
with your cries and your laughter

and your pouting faces
will open the door
of a happy tomorrow
of tenderness
and we will let ourselves be taken
to the taste of childhood
my heart, I have only a
of paradise to offer you
but I open my arms wide
to the future that lies ahead
and what it will bring us

à ma mère (to my mother)

it was the sun that warmed my life
gilded my skin
that saved me from the darkness I saw, lost
in your blue eyes
blue like the sky that belonged to you

you only remembered it
sometimes sitting in a church
you no longer felt joy or sadness
neither ambition nor bitterness
without a thought
fear forgotten
so fragile these infinite moments
like the blue sky and all of nature

then you denied them and lost them
forgotten forever
the end of your mad pursuit of fear
to you the choice of the most complete solitude
the nightmare that obsessed you
what was this hell of your creation
your suffering, your hate

ancient woman, mad woman
who never saw the human greatness
of the tragedy of her life
nor the waves of darkness
that she had engendered

solitude (loneliness)

tonight
I've been looking for people
I looked for them so much
I wanted them
to invade me
with their talk
with their words
I wanted to drown
in the lightness
but
it was I who spoke
it was I who drowned them
in the mist of my words
I drank, with great thirst
and the smoke and I
disintegrated
without separation
my thoughts ran
the race of space
even faster than time
and here I am
I find myself alone
alone in the abyss
carried away by the river of my words
that fall
and fall
forever in the void

femme de feuille (leaf woman)

leaf woman

sky woman

blue of the sky

and black of darkness

the twilight will reveal you

here you are all naked

a verdade (the truth)

what's right, what's wrong.
now is the only song

fight and you can win
acceptance is the only sin

the spiral is the dream
circles that never end circles
the reality we spin

la main ouverte (the open hand)

give
give me your hand
that I may put it on my heart
do you feel
its pain
its joy?
do you know
that it is not afraid
of the future?
it dances on the roof of the world
it even surpasses
its own state
it flies
and in his journey
it gives itself entirely
to perception

la vérité (the truth)

and the truth fell low
like droplets of dark water
which burst into the light

what bursts is transposed
it's the bubble that exposes itself
explodes
and in eternity lies



About Colette

"My life started as a big lie. I was born in South Africa in '46. It was a time of chaos, change and chance for some. I was born and officially dead 3 days later.

My birth mother was, as far as I was told, a very young and pretty Boer girl. The transfer of child ownership was to be secret, only the two women and the doctor knew. It was so secret in fact, that even my new father was ignorant and believed to the end of his life that my sister and I were his biological children.

My stepmother only fell "pregnant" when my father was away for at least 6 months. That way it was easy for her to cover the transfer with a bit of disguise.

She loomed over my life, imprisoned in her reality, producing lies like bullets that destroy."

This is how Colette started her biography.

If you read the poems first, before reading this presentation of the author, you already noticed that the dominating themes in this booklet are love, justice, empathy, family, and chiefly truth and lies.

Colette's childhood was appalling.

Rejected and neglected by an abusive stepmother, who had been assured by the doctor that she'll get a new-born baby boy, she was dropped at a very early age at a catholic convent school, while her sister stayed at home. Forced to pretend to be Jewish when she was allowed home, punished for malicious misdeeds of her older sister or for no reason at all, Colette developed a particular loathing of lies, an unappeasable need for love and – during the years of apartheid in South Africa – a particular awareness for social justice.

For all those who had a chance to meet her, Colette was a beautiful woman, in body and mind. She was strong, lovely and magnanimous, but humble and caring for all living beings, especially those rejected and in need.

Incapable of revenge or hate, she had a deep sorrow that never really healed. Despite all, she could be very funny, focused and fight like a lioness for her children.

Her appalling childhood perhaps explains in part that she had accumulated many severe diseases without any apparent link. Her physical suffering during the last few years of her life mirrored the emotional suffering during her childhood. But she never ever complained and was smiling and joking until the last moments of her life.

All poems and drawings in this book are from Colette. She didn't want them to be published during her lifetime but allowed me to do that "once she'd left".

Although interested in science, Colette thought that only poetry can describe "what really matters". While she didn't write more than two hundred and twenty-five poems and only started drawing when she couldn't move anymore without a wheelchair, she still described herself as a poetess, and whoever met her would agree. Her spirit, her way to act and to look at all aspects of life - and death - was a poetic way.

Her poems are published as an inspiration for those who, like Colette did, suffer physically and emotionally. While her life is neither a guidebook nor a model for anyone, it still shows that you can find courage and solace in poetry.

Günther Höser
December 2022

